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STATE OES/EGC WENDY MOORE, EUR MATTHEW BEH AND SUSAN
PARKER-BURNS, AND EUR/CE JAMIE MOORE

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SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA WELCOMES U.S. CLIMATE CHANGE GOALS

REF: A. STATE 97542
[1](#)B. BRATISLAVA 369
[1](#)C. BRATISLAVA 365

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The GOS welcomes USG greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and strongly agrees on the need to include all major economies in an eventual United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreement at Copenhagen. Slovakia understands the domestic political realities in the U.S. and believes an agreement on principles may come out of Copenhagen with specifics to be worked out later. The GOS plans to follow the prevailing EU consensus but wants to ensure that any agreement includes the ability to carry over current excess assigned amount units (AAUs) to the new post-Kyoto period. Slovakia has been overly eager to exploit the financial opportunities in the sale of excess AAUs, leading to allegations of corruption in the sale of emissions permits and the dismissal of key officials in the Ministry of Environment. In the fall-out resulting from the dismissals, the Ministry of Environment is restructuring the department responsible for climate change negotiations. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) Reftel A points were delivered to Helena Princova in the Department of Climate-Energy Package and Renewables at the Ministry of Environment. Princova said she understood the domestic political situation in the U.S. She welcomes U.S. participation in climate change talks along the lines proposed in the Waxman-Markey energy and climate legislation.

[1](#)3. (U) Princova emphatically agreed that the participation of all major economies was critical, including the fast-growing emerging countries. She said that commitments by major emerging countries to measure, reduce, and verify emissions rather than identify specific targets now would be enough. She supported the need for the U.S. and EU to speak with one voice.

[1](#)4. (U) Princova characterized Slovakia as a country that would follow the prevailing EU consensus as long as any agreement includes the ability to carry over current excess assigned amount units (AAUs) to the new Copenhagen period. The GOS expects to reach its emissions reduction targets comfortably and continue a trend of running excess AAUs for years to come. Slovakia does not want to forego the lucrative opportunities to sell excess AAUs to net buyers in the market.

[1](#)5. (U) Princova believes that UNFCCC negotiators will work up to the end to craft an agreement. She speculated that an agreement in principle may come out of Copenhagen with specifics to be worked out later. Princova said this result, or even no agreement, would probably be preferable to a flawed agreement produced by a hasty negotiation process.

[1](#)6. (SBU) Closer to home, Princova described a major transition

in her department's leadership because of ongoing allegations of corruption in the sale of emissions permits to the U.S.-registered Interblue Group (refs B and C). Both Peter Solcansky, the Director of Princova's department, and Pavol Tehlar, the General Director of the Environmental Quality Division, were forced to resign their positions. Along with the management changes, Princova said that her department's overall structure is now being reorganized. Climate change negotiators may get their own separate department, and Princova is rumored to be the eventual director of this new department.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: While the rumored changes at the Ministry of Environment will not likely affect the overall climate change position of Slovakia in the EU or during UNFCCC negotiations, they do represent a potentially promising shift. Princova is considered a professional and a technical expert on climate change issues with long experience in the Ministry throughout various governments. Solcansky and Tehlar were functionaries of the Slovak National Party (SNS) with backgrounds in military intelligence, not the environment. END COMMENT.

BALL